

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Moses commanded Israel not to imitate the sorcerous practices of the Canaanites (Deut 18:9–14). There was no need to resort to magic or divination, for you had made your will known through Moses, and you promised to raise up a prophet like him from among Israel (Deut 18:15–19). Peter said that Jesus was the fulfillment of this promise (Acts 3:22–23). I praise you for your Son, who “exegetes” you (John 1:18) and speaks your truth to my heart (Heb 1:1–2).

Today in Your Word

Today you told me more about the second part of Moses’ second sermon to the Israelites in the plains of Moab at the end of the 40-year wilderness period. Moses continued to explain your covenant laws in detail so the people would know how to live a holy life that was pleasing to you. The law of the Sabbatical year commanded all creditors to grant a release of whatever they had loaned to a fellow Israelite (Deut 15:1–2; cf. Exod 23:10ff). You urged the people to be generous and give their neighbor whatever they might need. This teaches me that it’s my responsibility to care for the poor and needy in my community. Moses pointed out that there *didn’t need to be* any poor among the Israelites, for if they would love and obey you, you would bless and prosper them (Deut 15:4–6). However, you knew this ideal would not be realized; inevitably the sin of some would affect the lives of all, and thus the poor would never cease from the land (Deut 15:11). This law was *not* telling the people to give aid to the wicked who had incurred your wrath (cf. 2 Chr 19:2; Amos 4:7). Rather, it was encouraging Israel to care for those who had been adversely affected by the results of the fall and the sin of others. If I aid those who are poor as a result of their own sin without confronting them about their need for repentance, I become an enabler of their sin. My obligation is to open my hand to the poor, while at the same time exercising discernment toward the root cause of that poverty.

Reflection

You told Israel’s future kings that one of their tasks was to write a copy of the law with their own hand. Am I keeping your Word close to my heart so that I will learn to fear you?

Request

Father, help me to memorize and meditate on your word. Graft it into my mind and give me the strength to wield it effectively against the enemy (Jam 1:21; Eph 6:16).

Thanksgiving

How grateful I am for your mighty arm! I say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” (Heb 13:6).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Oh! to Be Like Thee](#)” – Thomas O. Chisholm.

Meditation Verse: Deuteronomy 17:18–20.